

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-20

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DRAFTED BY ARA/CCA:PKJOHNSON:MB

APPROVED BY ARA:HWSHLAUDEMAN

ARA/CCA:ESLITTLE

USOAS:FMCNEIL(DRAFT)

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ARA-LA/BR:AFWATSON (DRAFT)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE

INFO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: US,CU,PFOR

SUBJ CT: US POLICY TOWARD CUBA

REF: BRASILIA'S 201

1. A NUMBER OF NEWS STORIES FROM MEXICO CITY ON JANUARY 8 REPORTED THAT IN A JANUARY 7 PRESS CONFERENCE CALLED BY CUBAN EMBASSY OFFICIALS TO COMMEMORATE THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION, CUBAN AMBASSADOR FERNANDO LOPEZ MUINO SAID THAT CUBA'S "SINGLE AND IRREVO-CABLE" CONDITION FOR RESUMING CONTACTS WITH THE U.S. IS THAT THE TRADE EMBARGO BE LIFTED. HE ALSO IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT CONTINUED U.S. OCCUPANCY OF ITS GUANTANAMO NAVAL BASE IS NOT AN OBSTACLE TO U.S.-CUBAN TALKS.

2. ALTHOUGH THE NEW YORK TIMES JANUARY 9 STATES THAT CUBAN EMBASSY SOURCES STRESSED THAT THE AMBASSADOR MERELY
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REITERATED CUBA'S OFT-STATED POLICY TOWARD THE U.S., SOME ACCOUNTS OF HIS REMARKS HEADLINED THIS STORY AS A CUBAN

SIGNAL AND WENT ON TO INTERPRET "CONTACTS" TO MEAN TALKS WITH A VIEW TOWARD NORMALIZING RELATIONS. THEREFORE, THE DEPARTMENT OFFERS THE FOLLOWING FOR THE ADDRESSEES' BACKGROUND AND USE IF QUERIED BY LOCAL OFFICIALS;

THE U.S. WATCHES CUBAN STATEMENTS CAREFULLY AND WE

SEE NOTHING IN AMBASSADOR LOPEZ MUINO'S REPORTED STATEMENTS THAT GOES BEYOND PREVIOUSLY ENUNCIATED AND LONG HELD CUBAN POSITIONS. FOR INSTANCE, IN HIS MOST RECENT LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF CURRENT U.S.-CUBAN MATTERS, FIDEL CASTRO SAID ON MAY 1, 1973, "WE ARE NOT INTERESTED IN RECEIVING ANY U.S. REPRESENTATIVES. WE SAY QUITE CLEARLY THAT WE WILL NOT DISCUSS ANYTHING WITH THE UNITED STATES WHILE THE BLOCKADE (I.E., TRADE EMBARGO) CONTINUES. IF THEY WANT A DIALOGUE, THEY MUST UNCONDITIONALLY END THE BLOCKADE FIRST. THIS IS THE POSITION THAT WE HAVE ALWAYS MAINTAINED."

ON GUANTANAMO CASTRO SAID ON MAY 1 THAT "THE GUANTANAMO BASE WAS NOT BASIC" (IN CONTEXT--NOT THE PRE-CONDITION TO DIRECT CONTACTS THAT THE TRADE EMBARGO IS) ALTHOUGH, "THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE HAVE CEASED TO DEMAND ITS RETURN. WE WILL ALWAYS DEMAND THE RETURN OF THIS PIECE OF CUBAN TERRITORY THAT WAS TAKEN FROM US BY FORCE." (CASTRO HAS MADE IT CLEAR ELSEWHERE ALSO THAT THE BASE IS NOT A TOP PRIORITY FOR HIM. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE DECEMBER 3, 1971 HE SAID, "SO WE SHALL LEAVE IT (THE BASE) THERE UNTIL THEY BECOME TIRED OR BORED WITH IT. OUR OBJECTIVES DO NOT INCLUDE THE CONQUEST OF THIS BASE OR RECOVERY OF IT.")

3. ADDRESSEES WILL HAVE NOTED SECRETARY'S STATEMENT IN HIS DECEMBER 27 PRESS CONFERENCE. "THE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO RAPPROCHEMENT WITH CUBA HAS BEEN THE HOSTILITY OF THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT AND ITS COMMITMENT TO REVOLUTIONARY POLICY THROUGHOUT THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE."

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4. THE SECRETARY ALSO RESPONDED IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE THIS AFTERNOON (JANUARY 10) TO A FURTHER QUESTION ON CUBA AND THE TEXT OF THIS QUESTION AND ANSWER ARE BEING SENT SEPTEL. KISSINGER

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